

Appl. No.: 10/806,731

Reply to Office Action of: 03/09/2006

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 8, 10, 12-14, 16-17 and 21-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Okayasu (US 6,419,515). The examiner is requested to reconsider this rejection.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify applicant's claimed invention. In particular, claim 1 claims that the electrical connector is adapted to connect to a mating electrical connector. Okayasu does not disclose or suggest that the connector (comprising both 10 and 20 as used by the examiner in his rational) is adapted to be connected to a mating electrical connector. Claim 1 also claims that the lever arm is sized and shaped to pivot about and against a portion of the second housing member. Okayasu does not disclose or suggest that the operating member 44 is sized and shaped to pivot about and against a portion of the male connector housing 10. The features of claim 1 are not disclosed or suggested in the art of record. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable and should be allowed.

Claim 10 has been amended to clarify applicant's claimed invention. In particular, claim 10 claims that the electrical connector is adapted to connect to a mating electrical connector. Okayasu does not disclose or suggest that the connector (comprising both 10 and 20 as used by the examiner in his rational) is adapted to be connected to a mating electrical connector. Claim 10 also claims that the second housing member is sized and shaped to be contacted by the second end of the latch to limit pivotal movement of the

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second end of the latch in an outward direction. Okayasu does not disclose or suggest that the male connector housing 10 is sized and shaped to be contacted by the end of the operating member 44 to limit pivotal movement of the end of the latch in an outward direction. The features of claim 10 are not disclosed or suggested in the art of record. Therefore, claim 10 is patentable and should be allowed.

Claim 21 has been amended to clarify applicant's claimed invention. In particular, claim 21 claims that the lever arm comprises a user contact surface at a rear end of the lever arm which is located directly above the seal retainer housing member. The user contact surface of the operating member 44 in Okayasu is not located directly above the housing member 29. The features of claim 21 are not disclosed or suggested in the art of record. Therefore, claim 21 is patentable and should be allowed.

Claim 24 has been amended to clarify applicant's claimed invention. In particular, claim 24 claims that the rear ends of the deflectable arms of the latch connect the latch to the first housing member. In Okayasu, the fulcrum 42 connects the locking arm 40 to the female connector housing 20; not the two arms (at 46) connecting the portion 47 to the fulcrum 42. The features of claim 24 are not disclosed or suggested in the art of record. Therefore, claim 24 is patentable and should be allowed.

Though the dependent claims contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should at least be allowable due to their dependence from allowable independent claims.

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However, to expedite prosecution at this time, no further comment will be made.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the examiner is invited to call applicant's attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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5/9/06
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